

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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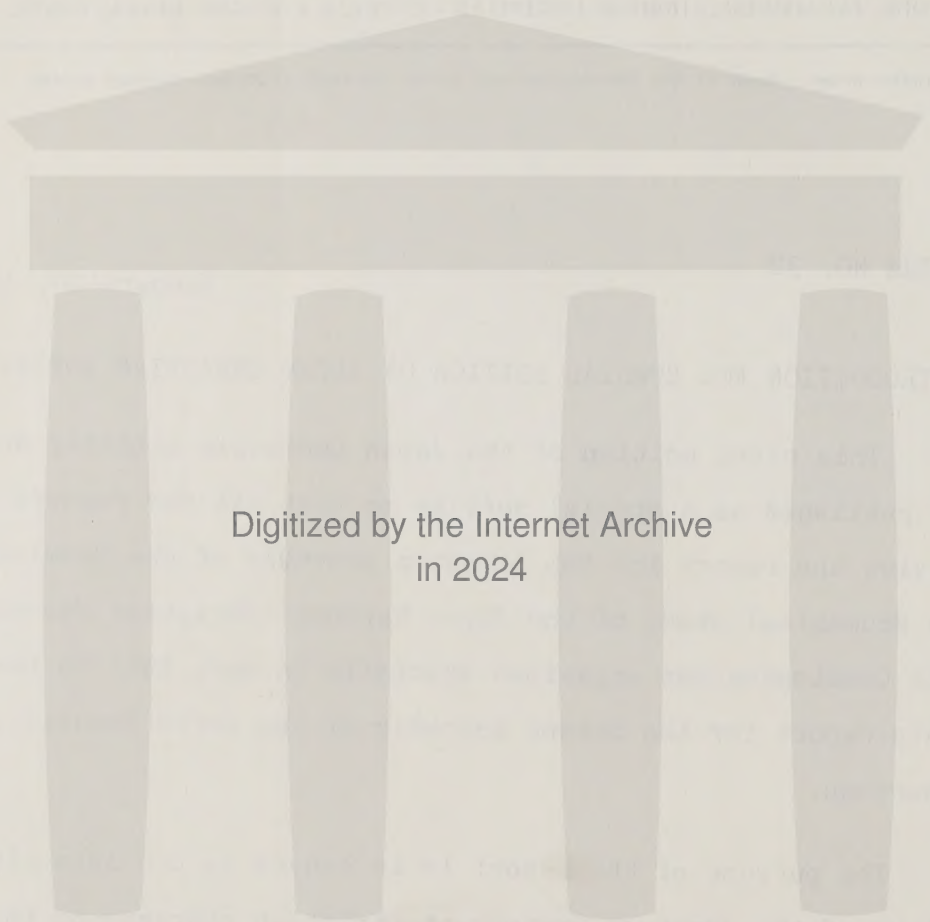
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## INTRODUCTION FOR SPECIAL EDITION OF JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

This extra edition of the Japan Christian Activity News is published as a special service so that all our readers can review the report for the Evanston Assembly of the Commission on Ecumenical Study of the Japan National Christian Council. The Commission was organized specially in May, 1953 to prepare this report for the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

The purpose of the report is to convey to the Assembly the views of the Japanese Protestant Christian churches on the topics which will be discussed at Evanston. It is the feeling of the editors that these views should be of vital interest to all those concerned with the cause of Christianity in Japan.

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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL STUDY OF  
THE JAPAN NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL ON  
PREPARATION FOR THE EVANSTON  
ASSEMBLY

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Tokyo, December 1953

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### FOREWORD

The Commission on Ecumenical Study of the National Christian Council of Japan was organized in May 1953.

The function of this Commission was defined as primarily to prepare a report on the views of the Japanese Churches with regard to the Second Assembly of the World Council to be convened in August 1954 at Evanston Ill., U.S.A.; and secondly to endeavor to permeate the Ecumenical Movement among the churches in Japan.

This Commission was appointed by the NCC as there is no other organizations except the council to represent the whole Christian Movement in Japan.

The Commission usually met once a month to compare the notes on study of the Evanston Preparatory leaflets published by the Study Dept. of the W.C.C. on the following topics.

Main Theme: Christ - The Hope of the World

Faith and Order - Our oneness in Christ and our disunity as Churches

Evangelism - The Mission of the Church

Social Questions - The Responsible Society

International Affairs - Struggle for World Community

Inter-group Relations - Racial and Ethnic Tensions

The Laity - The Christians in his Vocation

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The preparatory leaflets on the six subsidiary topics, issued by the Study Department of the WCC were translated into Japanese in one booklet form entitled "The Problem of the Modern Churches" and was distributed in Japan.

Our Commission on Ecumenical Studies continued its study since May 1953 for half a year, and alongside with the study of the Central Commission, a certain study groups were set up in several local centers, and the results of their study were also taken into consideration in drafting this report.





MAIN THEME - CHRIST - The Hope of the World

I. On the Main Theme - "Christ, the Hope of the World"

Even at this period at the close of the Second World War, the world situation is yet in a great confusion and chaos, suffering with no hope to see any light of final solution.

Everyone is greatly alarmed that the Third World War will become unavoidable if these groups of nations divided into two camps continue to pursue to accomplish their respective policies.

Never-the-less any reconciliation between the two seems very difficult and they are keeping on the hopeless tension.

In every age throughout the history of mankind men always struggled to find some bright hopes in their life, in vain, but this is a particular age, when it occurred in a special form in this world. Is there any hope for the contemporary men to see the "Silver lining of the dark clouds?"

It is prime importance to realize that Christ is the master of human history and the ultimate hope of the world.

The Christian churches established in various countries with respective historical backgrounds are now confronting the challenge of various thoughts from outside. In order to conquer them, there is need to unite the Christian forces on a world--wide scale.

It is commonly held that the American Theology is based on the progressive historical views, while the European Theology is generally inclined to the Eschatological views. It may be a very important question with the churches of the world that how these two currents of theological thoughts could get along together to build the virtue of Ecumenical churches. There may arise some expression of opinions based on the difference of theological views, even in the Evanston Assembly.

However, those two streams of thoughts must be blended into one message of the church based on the fundamental principles of the Biblical teachings.

The main theme seems to grips the key to open the treasury containing the old and new.

II. Some Comments on the Second Report

Our Commission discussed about the General theme as presented in the Second Report, and here are some Comments.

- (1) We appreciate the idea of 'Larger Christ' than the traditional conception of the church in its expression that Christ is not only the hope of the Christian churches but also of the whole world.





- (2) Our commission expressed their opinion, wondering if it is not better understood in the non-Christian land like Japan, where Christian tradition is not yet fixed, if the negative phases of the problem come first and the positive side be dealt with next. That means to change the order, to take up the second chapter first and first chapter next.
- (3) The scriptural reference, on the whole, seems as if they were cited at random with some preconceived idea that there seems no any continuity as if they are detached from their context. Our commission raised a question, what is the reason that the Biblical passages which directly mention the hope in Christ is not included, e.g. "Jesus Christ our Hope" (I Tim. 1:1) is not quoted here, but other passages rather indirectly referring to the hope are adopted. Our commission felt that it is not easy to find out what is involved on the eighth chapter of Romans in relation to the Christian hope in Christ.
- (4) The commission noticed the fact that hitherto our Japanese churches generally have been concentrating our efforts to build up the Kingdom by ethical social action, and rather neglected the mystical eschatological side of the New Testament teachings, although there have been certain groups or individuals upholding the doctrine. In the study of the Second Report, we now came to realize the need to emphasize the eschatological hope. It is our desire that our ethical social action should be based on the firm belief on the eternal Christian hope. We appreciate that in this Second Report, it reveals this idea and new tendency, although it is not defined clear enough, and we wish that the both phases of the Kingdom shall be more clearly stated in the next Report.
- (5) We realize that there are several more false utopian ideas besides those mentioned as Stalinism, Scientific humanism and democratic utopianism in the Second Report. Nationalism now newly reviving at this post-war period is exerting a strong influence among the nations, not only among the Asian countries but also all the nations of the world. Meanwhile in connection with it, the imperialism of great powers, consciously or uncsciously, is dominating the minds of many people, and imperialism alongside with nationalism may be counted as another one phase of



a false utopianism, too.

Nationalism closely connected with religious faith like State Shintoism in Japan is reviving along with the reactionary thought at present which shall be counted as one of the false utopianism.

- (6) Our commission expressed the views that we should try to avoid anything from giving false impression or misleading conception by terminology used in the Report. Some members referred to the use of the term as 'Stalinism' which is very likely to convey a false impression in association, with a particular person rather than an ideology. We wondered if is it not suitable to denote in a more general term on economic system of materialistic philosophy. In another place, we see the term apocalypticism is used. Such term is also very likely to be interpreted in peculiar ways, and our commission would like to suggest that those words should be very carefully used.





## FAITH AND ORDER

### I. Our Unity in Christ

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature"

(II Cor. 5:17)

When a man is in Christ, he is newly created, and while he is in this world he has his 'citizenship in Heaven' as the 'people of God' and belongs to the body of Christ.

So long as a man is in Christ and remain true to the intercession of Christ, he is entitled to the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Meanwhile, he will be given the privilege in participating in the war, when Christ, the conquerer, fight against the evil forces of the world. Indeed, those who belong to the Church of Christ, he belongs, to the church in unity in the Holy spirit working through the words of God and the Sacrament. Meantime, he is also member of the church militant which fight against the evil forces of devils, death and sin.

In this respect for those who are in Christ, there can never be any division so long as they are in Christ.

### II. Our Present Status

Notwithstanding the facts above mentioned, we deeply deplore that the church; the body of Christ actually remains in 'divided status' to our great regrets. What does this mean? Whenever the 'divided status' is talked about several problems will be considered, such as the self-examination of the Christians that the church does not function well under one organic union, division of the church into East and West, the distinction between the Catholicism and Protestantism, and the Criticism against the church by those who urge in division of denominations.

These problems are being involved and there may arise many other problems to be considered.

The National Christian Council is the only organ which is able to take up the work to investigate thoroughly the present status of the church from various angles. However, it is limited





mainly within the constituencies of the NCC, and it is almost impossible to solve the problem of the Church Unity only in Japan. There remains most complicated problems involved when we have to consider, about those denominations staying outside of the NCC, those new missionary bodies which began their work in Japan at the postwar period, those non-church groups, and moreover the problem with the Roman Catholic church etc.

### III. The Solution of the Problems

Although we are conscious of the 'Oneness in Christ' yet being actually under the present status of divided churches, it is unavoidable to get rid of the tension between unity and disunity.

However, the relationship is not so simple as to be solved easily by unification of the outward structures. As the problem is inter-related to the mission of the Gospel and the Sacrament, the study must begin on the true nature of the church. In order to preach Christ as the hope of the world, the mission of the Gospel and the Sacrament must be rightly presented to the world.

The words of God being the power to the salvation of man, it will have both phases of eschatological as well as ethical and social features, when it comes in contact with the life of man.

### IV. Conclusion

The above mentioned statement may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Theological investigation on the fundamental nature of the church shall be required. In this respect, the conception of the churches of the constituencies of the N.C.C. shall be thoroughly discussed based on the scriptural teachings.
- (b) The unity of the church is already realized among the Christians in Christ. However, if we wish to accomplish, the organic unity, it must be considered on the world-wide scale.

If we take up the problem within the area of Japan, it will not only help to solve the problem, it will rather hinder the solution of it. In order to make missionary enterprise more effective we wish the problem of unification of the organization shall be presented to the world council for further discussion.



## V. Church Union in Japan

In June 1941 the Church of Christ in Japan was organized as a union of thirty four Protestant denominations. The United Church had to withstand against the pressure from outside civil and military powers in order protect the life of the Christian church. We believe that the consolidation of Christian forces at the critical time in facing and dealing with the problems with united front certainly proved to be most effective, in protecting the life and interest of Christian religion in Japan.

At the close of the war however, the situation rapidly changed, and some denominations once united had to withdraw. The United Church at first rather loosely united allowing the historic characteristics of the former denominations, finding unity in varieties.

However, it naturally has developed to be real one church with its own new creed, and so some had to withdraw, though there may be several some other reasons involved in it. Notwithstanding of those difficulties, the Church of Christ is making steady progress as the greatest church in Japan, holding 70% of the whole Protestant members. Thus the Church Union in Japan shall prove to be a worthy experiment in the Union Movement.





## EVANGELISM - The Mission of the Church

### I. Practical results of Evangelization of Japan

We are drawing near to the historic year of commemoration of the Centenary of the Opening of Protestant missions in Japan in 1959. The practical results of the evangelization of Japan can not be said as a great success. Therefore it needs thorough study and research on evangelism. The hindrances against the evangelism in Japan shall be considered under two topics.

(a) Objective elements - outside condition

(b) Elements within the church - inside condition

These two may be sub-divided into several items.

#### (A) Objective hindrances

(1) In every country there will exist some religious system which may be compared to and confront with Christian religion.

In Japan, especially in rural area, there the primitive ethnic religion still remain and holds its ground firmly. Even among those intellectuals in general, the primitive or superstitious religious sentiments still are prevailing. One of the remarkable phenomena at the Post-war period is the most active uprising of the pseudo-religions or new-regions. They got several millions of adherents within a course of a few years. The religious conception of Japanese in general is in the stage to be well satisfied by the doctrine appealing, to the material and carnal benefit, which is propagated by those new religions.

Meanwhile, there are great religious systems like Buddhism and Shintoism which have long historical background and heritage. The Shintoism had a special relations with the State, and it was closely connected with the political power of the State.

It had to give up the special privilege as the state religion, at the close of the war.

However, recently there is some movement to revive and regain its former privilege. The Shintoism holds its ground deeply rooted in the heart of our Japanese people as national cult based on traditional ancestor worship. The Buddhism being highly developed religion strongly holds its ground in the hearts of the multitude of the





people with its tradition through the national life for more than thousand years.

Both Shintoism and Buddhism, not only strong as religious system as they are but also created the social conditions along their teachings.

- (2) The spiritual and social background of our Japanese people stand on the way of Christian Evangelism.
- Firstly The collective community life such as feudalistic family system and traditional village customs firmly grips the minds of our people, and it makes most difficult for Christian evangelism as the general public are not yet fully developed in the spirit of freedom of individuals as the modern man.
- Secondly It goes without saying that how narrow nationalism centering around the Imperial household proved to be a great hindrance for Christian evangelism in the past, and although it seemed to be straightened at the close of the war when Emperor himself declared that he is not a God but a man, yet recently some signs of revival of the same national sentiment are seen among the general public.
- Most of our Japanese nation are considering the Christian religion as a foreign religion. At the close of the war, some people took their attitude likely to readily accept Christianity along with the occupation policy. However, now-a-days, the American policy is freely criticized; and the feeling of anti-Christ is gradually prevailing among our nation.
- Thirdly Communism, scientific humanism, and nihilism are taking hold of the minds of our people especially among the younger generation, and it is inevitable that such a tendency on thought life stands on the way of Christian evangelism.
- Lastly Japanese Social life, especially at this post-war period, is so generally suffering from moral degradation, and so the people living among such a social environment, influenced by such a trend of thought, naturally lacks in the strong will bravely to change the course of life and resolutely to become a Christian.

## (B) The Problem of hindrances within the Church

### I. The Church's Introversion

- (1) The church has to challenge to the world with the Gospel, as the light of the world and the salt of the earth. However, it becomes so weak that it is unable to bear the burden of its mission.
- The churches sometimes too busy for their own maintenance eager to self-support tend to take negative



and secular attitude to shut up its life, solely within the church. Naturally the aggressive evangelistic enthusiasm gradually shall retard.

It cannot be said that all the churches in Japan has the tendency to confine within the church, but we should have deep self-retrospect at this point.

- (2) Christian evangelism was developed along the line of the western civilization brought in to Japan since the Meiji Restoration. Under such a circumstances it was developed among the intellectuals comparatively in great cities or in the urban area, and the Gospel does not yet fully reach to the laboring class and the rural area.
- (3) In whatever age, the mode of thinking between the older and younger generations is naturally different, but the rapid change of our Japanese social life and the radical transference of all the thought life at the post-war period, makes it distinctively different in their ideas, even only a few years difference in their age. This trend of thought naturally reflects itself even among the church members.
- (4) As the history of Christian evangelism in Japan is not yet long enough, the Christian customs and manners as well as the vocabularies are not yet fully assimilated to the national sentiment.
- (5) The evangelistic line of work in Japan is so complicated now that so many new missions which have no relation with the NCC and do not cooperate with others have come in to begin their evangelistic work at this post-war period, detrimental to the missionary enterprise.

## II. Hopeful signs of Evangelism in Japan

- (1) Through the Ecumenical movement, the revival of evangelistic Theology has been brought in and the true meaning of the world mission of the churches gradually coming to be realized by our Christians. As the result of this tendency, the research and study on the strategic policies of the Evangelization of Japan is being urgently needed. In this respect, the "Report on the Fundamental Strategic Policies of Evangelism in Japan" prepared by the NCC is the most important sources, and it must be recognized as an epoch-making study work in this country. The commission used it as the most reliable source materials for reference on Evangelism.





("The Summary Report on the Fundamental Strategic Policies of Evangelism in Japan" is printed as an appendix to this report.)

(2) Missionary self-consciousness of the laity

The laity is now gradually awakening to the missionary obligation that the Evangelism is not only the responsibility of the clergy, but every Christian should feel his own duty for evangelism together with the ministers.

The laity should be responsible for "visitation evangelism" and they should stand on the front line on "Vocational Evangelism."

(3) Pioneer Evangelism

It may be said that Japanese churches are all engaging in Pioneer Evangelism in general, and the policies are taken now toward rural towns and villages from the cities, and to the laboring class than the intellectuals. However it will take some years to see the actual results of the work.

(4) Activities of the foreign missionaries

The relationship between Japanese churches and foreign Missions are generally defined as passing through the following stages.

- (a) The stage of autonomous evangelism of the missions.
- (b) The stage of cooperation, between the mission and the church.
- (c) The stage of coordination or integration of the mission.

The majority of the mission boards working in Japan today seems to be on the (b) or (c) stages. Japanese churches depended much upon the missions in Pioneer evangelism in the past, and the cooperation of the Missionaries is imperative to reach to the vast unoccupied field; especially we badly need those missionaries specially trained for particular lines of work in order to strengthen the weak points in our Pioneer evangelism.

We always welcome missionaries from abroad, under the spirit of Ecumenical movement, and meantime we are



praying for the day will come when our churches also could participate in the world evangelism.

In this respect, we shall refer to a statement "Strategic Policies on Missionary Cooperation" which we have submitted to the different world conferences.

(5) Christian educational evangelism

In this field where Christian religion is considerably minor forces among other great religions, the role of Christian educational evangelism through Christian schools, Christian kindergartens must be considered very great and important.



STRATEGIC POLICIES ON MISSIONARY COOPERATION

- (1) We have no any standing strategy committee at present, altho' we have Church relation committee of the NCC.  
We should like to have such a committee organized by the missionary and church leaders by the influence of the WCC.
- (2) We shall refer to such a strategy committee such matters as:
  - (a) As a committee on comity it shall have to study about the overlapping of the work or division of area.
  - (b) To arrange and to plan together in order to begin the pioneer work.
- (3) An exchange of experience with other Asian countries shall be helpful for us, to know the real situation through exchange of personnel and reports.
  - (a) We are much embarrassed by the confusion of so many new non-cooperative missions working along their own way on the field, but there is no means to straighten this matter as the constitution of our country guarantees the freedom of propagation. We are afraid that there would be no any other way to check on this problem than to leave it to the judgment of our general public.

There are so many new American denominations sending out their missionaries to Japan at this post-war period, and almost all of these new missionaries are non-cooperative with neither Japanese churches nor NCC, to our great regret.

These Missions may not be in the NCCC in the States, and may be difficult to approach to them even in America, but it will help the work on the field if their attitude be changed by the influence from their home base, and respond to us to cooperate with the Missions and established churches connected with the NCC.

- (b) It is desirous that the WCC would urge any other churches which want to begin work among unreached people here in Japan, first of all, to get in close touch with the NCC.

It is true that some denominations withdrew from the United church partly due to the influence of the former denominational connection with older churches, and it is unfortunate if the older churches take the attitude to encourage the separation of unity among the younger churches.

- (4) As the new policies of the Mission Boards Working in Japan, we wish you would consider that:





- (a) The candidate secretary while recruiting missionaries for Japan, would be himself well equipped with some knowledge and experience on Japan.
  - (b) To appoint some specially trained missionaries for such as laborers evangelism, factory evangelism, rural evangelism etc.
  - (c) To consider the appointment of Japanese missionaries to send out to other countries.
- (5) Before the war, there existed some overseas missionary agencies in Japan such as follows:

East Asia Missionary Society  
Overseas Missionary Association  
South Sea Islands Mission

These agencies used to send Japanese ministers to Manchuria, China and South Sea Islands. However all these agencies had to resolve during the war. It is our earnest prayer that some such missionary work should be re-started when the situation become fitted for such a plan.

Recently Japan Episcopal church sent out a Japanese pastor for work in Okinawa.

It is possible that the Japanese churches to bear the financial responsibilities in sending the missionaries to the near-by countries.

- (6) The missionary work for Indonesia, Malay and other countries will be much more expensive and it is desirable that our missionary agency might cooperate with some of the older churches in joint support of those missionaries.

Types of work should be decided on an inter-denominational basis:

International peace; social reform; Christian problem of living; church school work; work for students; work for soldiers; social survey; study on church and economic relations; Audio-Visual Aid; Christian literature; research work; public relations; language school for missionaries; compilation and publication of hymnals.



## SOCIAL QUESTIONS - RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY

### I. New Approach to the Social Questions

The Social problems can never thoroughly be solved merely by various "isms" such as 'individualism or totalitarianism' communism or capitalism, 'liberalism or conservatism'. Human rights are now generally recognized in various nations, and are claimed by every person. It is now commonly held that the state should be responsible for the welfare of 'a least one'.

Generally speaking, the social security regulations are gradually realizing even in Japan as a welfare state. Christians should take up the Social problems as their responsibility toward God and man and do their best to promote the interest and welfare of society.

The conservative views are now speedily passing which hold the principles that the Christians who wholeheartedly devote themselves to the salvation of individual souls rather than any social activities are the most faithful and devout ones. The idea of "Responsible Society" should be cherished among us Christians on the distinctive Christian view-point, apart from the secular conception of society without God.

There is our Christian duty to be responsible toward God and man and render service superior to the ordinary activity of those non-religious people.

In Japan, ever since the Meiji Restoration, all the social reform and welfare movements have been initiated by the Christians as the forefront Pioneer leaders on the field.

### II. Social Welfare Work and Christianity

Now that the Social Welfare works are gradually transferred to the state following the regulations concerning social security, there arise some new questions among our Christian social workers.

Those Christian social institutions formerly established by the Christians now are receiving the subsidy from the government, and are gradually losing the Christian spirit, and there is a danger to be secularized just as the ordinary social institutions.

However, even though Christian institutions thus are enlisted under the administration of the government, Christians' view on Social Welfare work must be different from those non-Christian social workers, and the Christian characteristics should be maintained as their noble heritage.

In this respect, the responsibility of the churches and Christians on social welfare activities are increasingly





heavy more than in the former days, and we feel the need that Christian social institutions must be well equipped, not to fall behind the governmental institutions in their facilities. The church should provide well trained social workers in this line of work. We shall also allude to the need of specially trained missionary social workers, and will look forward to the devotional works of the Deaconess movement.

### III. To Enforce the Sunday Vacation

The traditional custom in the western countries to observe vacation on Sundays based on the scriptural injunction is the most noble inheritance of humanitarian system. However, there is general trend of secularization throughout the world, especially in Japan where Christian tradition is not established, it is very important to urge the observance of the system of Sunday Vacation. Now Sundays are holiday for the nation, but it is almost nominal, as even the public schools are planning all kinds of activities on Sundays. We desire that the WCC would take some steps as to confer with other organizations such as UNESCO to enforce this system on the world-wide scale.

### IV. The Problems on Temperance Movement

In the past, Japanese churches generally have taken up the attitude of strict temperance. Other religions like Shintoism and Buddhism have been morally degraded just as the salt lost its savor, Christians have been only ones who could set a good example and speak about the moral chastity and good habits with conviction.

Now at this post-war period when confusion and depravity of moral life being so remarkable temperance is so urgent, and Christians only hold the key to open the way to lead the general public.

These problems related to the sorene family life, the temperance of youth, the use of narcotic drugs as opium, cocain etc. are not only national problems but also problems closely related to the world at large, so that the problems should be taken up at the World Conference for discussion.



## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS - The Struggle for World Community

### I. Foreword

The world is severely suffering in great confusion and we Christians must realize that the whole world is confronting a grave crisis at present.

We should take into consideration the following attitude when we deal with the problems on International Affairs.

- (1) We must clearly define, the causes of the confusion by scientific study of the objective facts.
- (2) We must find out the basis for solution of the international problems.
- (3) We must find out what contributions are we Christians expected to make toward it.

### II. Problems underlying the International Affairs

We should clearly discern two facts underlying the International problems. The first is the relation between the groups of Soviet Russia and its Satellites on the one hand and U.S.A. and Western free states on the other.

The tension between these two groups has not been relaxed even a little, but rather it seems that the armed competition is becoming increasingly acute.

As the results, both sides are so threatened and alarmed, overtaken by hysteria caused by propaganda in the cold war.

We are afraid that it will lead to the grave tragedy affecting the destiny of all the nations.

The second problem underlying the International Affairs is the revolutionary change now taking place in the under-developed countries. Since the close of the war, many backward nations have become new independent states.

As the industrial economic difficulties inevitably involves the political problems, this second problem tends to be closely intertwined with the first problem of political, militaristic situation, and will gradually accentuate the dangerous International situation.

Japan is indeed suffering from the lack of food stuff to support her overflowing population, in her harrow land with inadequate production. India and other nations are likewise suffering from similar reasons. These problems should be investigated internationally from the Christian standpoints.



### III. International Organ for Solution of International Problems

Under the Present Situation of the World the Organ of the United Nations is the only efficient organ.

We know that the U.N. is neither perfect nor strong organization at present, but we must recognize the need of this organ for the time being. The reasons for supporting this organ are as follows:

- (1) The U.N. is the unique organ to provide the opportunities to discuss about the international problems with the delegation from the Soviet Union and its Satellites countries, and that of the United States and Western free states.
- (2) The U.N. has hitherto been successful to prevent the military aggression to certain extent. Korean Problems would not be in order as they are now without the protection of the U.N.
- (3) The U.N. has served to promote the Human Rights, to give freedom to the suppressed nations, and to assist in the social, economic and educational developments of the under-privileged nations, through its related organizations.

We should know that there could be certain regional organs to serve to solve the international problems in certain areas of the world. The situation is not yet fully understood by the Christians in Japan.

Again the group of nations are divided into two camps confronting against each other, just as in the present world situations. Some consider it dangerous for the peace of the world to join hands and cooperate with either side.

### IV. Possible Contribution of the Church and the Christians

- (1) It may be almost impossible to know the real situation of the world at present. So much so when the propaganda affects the thought and life of all the people in general. This is true within a country as well as among the countries of the world.

Japanese churches hitherto could not have much knowledge of the real situation of the world. However, we feel it very important that the churches of the different countries of the world should exchange their informations and views as far as possible.

In this respect, Christians would be able to render very important service which none others cannot compete, in order to promote the international understanding and mutual





friendship, in presenting just and right informations unbiased by any outside influence.

- (2) At this post-war period, when the nations of the world are inclined to foster the feeling of hatred and enmity each other by biased propagandism, only Christians, who believe in Christ, the Prince of Peace, would be able to contribute to the reconciliation of the world.  
It is very important to send well trained Christian experts with faith and ability, from one country to the other under-developed countries.  
Japanese churches are praying and expecting the day will come when we can restore the Christian fellowship with the churches in the East Asia.
- (3) It is very desirous that freedom of Emigration from over-populated countries to the vast area with rare population may be made possible, and it is hoped for that the emigration might be carried on arranged between the Christian churches of the countries concerned, that it may contribute much to the peace of the world.
- (4) As Japanese Christians are the minority of the population, it is very important that the Christian opinions and views on the International problems should be generally unified, as far as possible, and the expression of the divided opinions among the Christians should be avoided.  
Japanese churches have been trying and will try to express their United views through the Commission on International Affairs of the NCC. in connection with the Commission of Churches on International Affairs.
- (5) We heartily appreciate the work of the C.C.I.A. established jointly by the W.C.C. and the I.M.C.  
It may be said that our Japanese churches do not know much about the activities of the C.C.I.A. However, at the opportunity of the Evanston Assembly, we would hope that we should establish closer fellowship with the churches in the East Asia, and exchange right informations and make thorough study and research, in order to contribute to the peace of the world.



INTER-GROUP RELATIONS - Racial and Ethnic Tension

At this post-war period, the trend of thought of national independence and self-consciousness of the nations in the East Asia may be interpreted as a reactionary feeling arisen against the supremacy of the western nations.

As the results of this trend, the relations between different nations and races have been changed to some extent. To-day, it seems that a new problem has been created by the humiliating reflection of the white races and by the strong conviction of the Asian nations.

The Gospel which preaches the equal standing of all the nations before God, the Father of mankind, is the unique measure to solve the problems lying on the way of fellowship between the races and nations. The Christian churches have to bear very important mission to solve this problem. However, in order to accomplish this mission the church just take some steps before she could discharge her duty. The church although comprised of Christians, being a congregation of man naturally is formed as group and the community life within the church becomes the important part of the church life. At present stage, the relation between different groups must be solved by the Christian community idea.

I: What would be the most urgent problem with regard to this Inter-group relations our Japanese churches are confronting at present?

Japanese nation learned to remain humiliated as a defeated nation, there is no special problem to be taken up. Resident western people concerned are the missionaries or service men of the security forces, and their relation to the people does not create any special problems.

There are living in the northern island Hokkaido a small number of "Ainu tribe" and this also makes no any problem. Only one peculiar problem with us is the Korean resident (Northern and Southern) in this country. They are now politically divided even living together in Japan, and they should establish real fellowship and mutual understanding and cooperation through the church life, and we pray that both sides will come to unite into one body in Christ through the intercession of our churches.

Our Japanese churches heartily wish to restore Christian fellowship with the Korean churches, and we wish the American, Canadian and other Missions working in Korea will understand our heart and desire about this matter.





II. What would be the main emphasis in the Evanston Assembly with regard to the inter-group relations in order to serve most efficiently to the churches of Japan?

We hope that in dealing with the problems of the race and group relations, the Evanston Assembly would not confine the efforts much on the formal methods or measures, but put the emphasis to create the mutual understanding and fellowship between the churches of the different nations that they may realize the oneness in Christ.

III. To what extent the solution of the racial problems in Japan will depend on the solution of the problem in world-wide scale?

With regard to this problem, we wish first of all the fears and threat of war must be removed, that the militarism diminish throughout the world, and the principle of the welfare state will be firmly established in every country. Then the Ecumenical movement shall fully permeate even to the small group of local churches that the belief of oneness in Christ firmly grips the minds of all the Christians. In this manner the steps toward solution of the problems regarding the international and inter-group relations would be steadily advanced.

In Japan where Christian religion is generally taken as the foreign religion and there is propaganda in certain quarters against Christians as if we are serving to help the American imperialism. We believe we Christian in Japan should be conscious of the special position we are placed at present, and our relations with the East Asian churches.



## THE LAITY - Christians in his Vocation

### I. On Christian Vocation

In the preparatory leaflet, the 'vocation' is not used in scriptural meaning as the God's call for salvation, and it seems to be used in relation to the guiding purpose of life or duty and responsibility of man's occupation, in its modern meaning.

Although it is very important for the modern church to consider the meaning of occupation of man, when we consider the 'vocation' of a Christian, it ought to be dealt with in connection with the "vocation" as a calling for salvation? For a Christian who by the "calling for salvation" by God became a Christian, the meaning of a man's duty on occupation apart from the God's calling would not be able to interpret it rightly.

Then, when we take up the problem of Christian in his vocation, the church's attitude toward Christian's duty on occupation should be examined, and meantime Christian's duty and responsibility to accomplish his "vocation" should also be investigated in its Biblical meaning.

### II. The Meaning of being a "Christian"

In the preparatory leaflet it has been explained that this top topic was taken up mainly concerned with the daily life of the Christians related with his Christian belief.

However, if we confine the meaning of 'vocation' to the man's profession or occupation, in order to present various problems related to the occupation and faith in modern social life, the 'Christians' should be interpreted as those who are not clergy but the laity.

And when we deal with the "Christians in his vocation" we should once consider the idea of "Christian's Universal Priesthood" and the "functional difference of clergy and laity".

- (a) In what sense clergy and laity respectively receive God's calling?
- (b) In what respects is there difference of 'vocation' between the clergy and laity?

### III. Procedures dealing with the Topic

- (1) Basis of the preparatory leaflets shall be defined as follows:





- (a) It has taken up various difficult problems confronting the Christians in modern society, and with regard to the church's attitude for her reflection rather than the study on God's calling of a Christian.
  - (b) It seems that the western churches as having enough power to Christianize the society, aim at the mass evangelism rather than to strive to save the individual souls.
  - (c) Just as to keep pace with the actual society, confronting the challenge of the communism and the crisis of the western civilization, it seems to reveal the tone of attitude of impatience, negative apologetic rather than the positive attitude of witnessing the Gospel.
- (2) In Japan where missionary work is in its Pioneer stage, as the younger churches must aim at the evangelism whether in opportunity or in crisis. In this respect, the laity as well as the clergy, must feel the responsibility to witness the Gospel, as "The Soldier of Christ". When we take up the topic as "Laity or Christian in his vocation" we should thoroughly study the positive vocation for Evangelism, "to witness the Gospel in the daily life in actual society".

Here lies the problem of selection of the occupation and the kind of professional work and how to carry on the work with Christian conscience.

Especially in Japan at present where having the problem of over-population and unemployment, there is no freedom to choose the occupation in order to support himself and his family.

In this connection we feel the most urgent need for the clergy is to be aware of the personal condition of the Christian and through personal pastoral counselling to lead and give help and advice to take the right attitude in solution of their occupational problems.

